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Rivers of Hope, Monticello

Monday, February 27, 2023

Dear Public Safety Committee Members,

This letter is written in support of HF 1712. Rivers of Hope is a family violence agency serving Sherburne and Wright Counties in MN. Our mission is to provide a community coordinated response to end family violence through advocacy, education, and interagency collaboration.

Rivers of Hope has a Youth Program to support primarily middle school and high school aged students who have witnessed or experienced family violence or teen dating violence. We offer support, education, and referrals to community resources. Through education and empowerment, the youth program helps youth move beyond violence to healthy relationships.

Our work is critical. In 2022, we supported 200 youth in our program. Without support from the State Capitol, our work is impossible. We strongly believe in equipping our young people with the tools to develop healthy relationships and to feel supported when navigating violence in their own relationships.

If HF 1712 is passed we would receive more funding that would allow us to reach more young people. We know violence does not discriminate. Please, please support the work that we are doing to end violence.

Sincerely,

*Melanie Harmon*

Melanie Harmon

Youth Advocate Team Lead

Rivers of Hope